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October 10, 1997

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Mr. William Caton
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Mr. Caton:

This letter is to recommend the appointment of David Sharp, President and CEO of the Virgin Islands Telephone Corporation (VITELCO), as the Insular Representative, or as one of the five Rural Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers Representatives, on the Federal-State Joint Board's Rural Task Force on universal service funding. Because of his years of experience, Mr. Sharp would be able to provide the task force with a wealth of knowledge about insular and rural telephone company costing service and business issues.

The Joint Board will find that Mr. Sharp is able to add a "big picture" viewpoint to the Task Force's debate, and to provide informed and practical guidance on how the issues facing rural and insular companies can be harmonized with national tele-communications policy goals. To effectively develop universal service funding programs for rural and insular areas, this representation is critical to the Joint Board and the Federal Communications Commission.

Mr. Sharp has been President and CEO of the VITELCO for over five years, and has a total of 17 years with the company in various capacities. He has extensive hands-on knowledge of financial and business operations, as well as a technical background in engineering. Additionally, VITELCO is a rural local exchange carrier with approximately \$55

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million in annual exchange service revenues and serves the islands of St. Thomas, St. Croix, St. John and Water Island in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Because of his background, he is fully versed in the unique issues that face rural and insular local exchange carriers, including unique impacts due to geographic isolation, environmental considerations, local economic climate and consumer demographics. He has also been actively participating in implementation of the provisions of the 1996 Telecommunications Act, including local competition, expansion of business opportunities and promotion of universal service.

Mr. Sharp has extensive background in the operation of the FCC's universal service program. He has made extensive presentations before both the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service and to the FCC. Mr. Sharp also testifies frequently before the Virgin Islands Public Service Commission on a wide variety of topics. VITELCO is a substantial universal service support recipient because of its high cost characteristics due to its rural and insular circumstances.

Mr. Sharp is also an active participant in industry group meetings, such as USTA and its mid-size company group. Mr. Sharp was honored nationally by USTA as a recipient of the PaceSetter Award in 1996. This top industry award is bestowed annually by USTA to the person or organization that has displayed exceptional service, or has performed outstanding accomplishments that benefit the telephone industry. Attached for your information is more details on Mr. Sharp's qualifications.

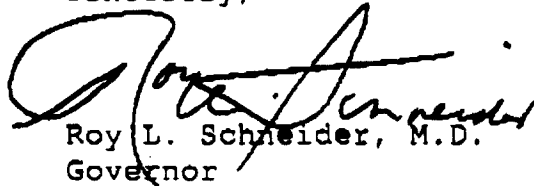
Mr. Sharp's knowledge and experience would be critical to the ability of the Rural Task Force to examine issues on universal service provided to rural and insular local exchange carriers. As you know, these issues are critical not only to the people of the U.S. Virgin Islands, but also to rural and insular areas throughout the United States. Mr. Sharp can provide the expertise needed to resolve the

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many and contentious issues associated with promoting
universal services.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to
contact me.

Sincerely,



Roy L. Schneider, M.D.
Governor

Cc: Public Notice Service List

David L. Sharp

**President and Chief Executive Officer
Virgin Islands Telephone Corporation
St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands**

Mr. Sharp began serving as the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Virgin Islands Telephone Corporation in March 1992. He began his career at Vitelco in 1980 as a Systems Engineer. Prior to Vitelco, Mr. Sharp worked in the aerospace industry at General Dynamics Inc.

Positions Held

During Mr. Sharp's tenure at Vitelco he has held positions as: a Central Office Manager; the Director of Engineering; the Assistant Vice President of Engineering, and Vice President of Operations.

Recognition and Awards

In 1996 Mr. Sharp was honored nationally by the United States Telephone Association (USTA) as the recipient of the Pace Setter Award. This top industry award is bestowed annually by the USTA to the person or organization that has displayed exceptional service, or has performed outstanding accomplishments that benefit the telephone industry.

Industry Experience

Mr. Sharp is: a member of the United States Telephone Association Mid-Size Companies Committee; has made extensive presentations before the Federal State Joint Board on Universal Service in Insular Areas; and has provided testimony to the Federal Communications Commission on Universal Service. He functions as the director of regulatory affairs for the Virgin Islands Telephone Corporation, and he has provided testimony on numerous occasions before the local Public Services Commission.

Education and Community Service

Mr. Sharp holds a B.S. in electrical engineering from Purdue University and a M.B.A. from the University of the Virgin Islands. He is active on the boards of several community and civic organizations, including the Rotary Club of St. Thomas where he serves as president, the Virgin Islands Council of Boy Scouts, and the St. Thomas/St. John Chamber of Commerce.

